

No. 194. TASMANIAN FIELD NATURALISTS' CLUB BULLETIN

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May 1975

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Mrs. T.L. Stephens; Miss D. Wise.  
Librarian - Mrs. M.J. McDonald and then Miss A. Cooper.  
Delegates, Federation of Tasmanian Field Naturalists' Clubs -  
Mrs. Thorpe, Mr. Hewer.

NEXT MEETING will be held in the Royal Society Room, Tasmanian Museum on Thursday 15th May, at 7.45 p.m.

The speaker will be Mr. D.R. Gregg, Director of the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, on that subject.

NEXT CUTTING - Still to be arranged

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Library - New books - not to be stored, but well worth reading. - see our librarian Miss Ann Cooper.

'Forest we care for' - donated by Mrs. Thomas

'Australian Continent in danger" and

'Great Barrier Reef' donated by Miss Barbara Greenstreet.

'Bird Life' by Rumley received for commentary.

Publications too good to miss 'Habitat' published by Australian Conservation Foundation, only \$3. for six issues per year. or become a member for \$8. per year. See the Secretary.

'The World of Olegas Truchanas' - It is on the market. Each photo is a gem. The memories of Lake Pedder, the grandeur of the Arthur Range, The living forest of Mount Ann or the Silence after the storm. Olegas certainly did have the unique quality of Tasmania's inexpressible beauty with his artistic insight of photography. If you can spare the \$19.50 you will gain and help.





Other PublicationsPALM ORCHID FIND NEAR PERTH, W.A.

(as reported in the "West Australian", 3rd March, 1975)

A copy of one of the world's strangest orchids, *Spiculæa ciliata*, was received this summer at Boulder Rock, about 50 Km. south of Perth by members of the W.A. Native Orchid Society, whose members are listing as many orchids as possible, any of which are believed to be in danger of extinction.

The orchid is sometimes known as the Yellow Orchid because of its jointed stem and leaves. It produces a green and brown flower when the foliage withered and the plant has apparently died. Specimens found at Boulder Rock bloomed profusely and lasted well after they were collected.

NEW MAMMAL

In September 1973, Dr. Peter Goversoff, of the Institute of Medical and Veterinary Science, Adelaide, accidentally discovered Australia's newest mammal in a yard about 20 Km. east of Adelaide. The tiny mouse is about the same size as the ordinary house mouse, weighs about 10 gm.

At first only two males were discovered, but further searching has found a female, with a litter of five, which she carries in a backward facing pouch. The new 'mice' are being encouraged to breed in captivity, so hopefully other females found will also produce litters and provide ample material for study.

Like the house mouse, this animal has a pointed snout and many short, sharp teeth. It is said to belong to the same family of meat eaters as the native cat and the Tasmanian Devil. Apparently the new mammal is yet without a name.

FOSSILS

Tasmania has seen a few fossil discoveries, like the *Zygomaturis* from Cowbray Swamp area (N.W. Tas.) size of a small bullock; fossils remains found at Beach Road, near Hobart; smaller fossils from Fossil Bluff on the South West, and in the North East. We can only mention to date fossil remains of large bird like creatures found near the foot of Mount Cameron in 1962. These dated "from mid to late Tertiary and Pleistocene in age". Details in the *Emu*, Vol 74, part 4, October, 1974, by Rich & Green. Other types no doubt have been found from time to time, and no doubt other fossils will be discovered in the future .. But what a thrill it will be to dig up something unexpected like fossil bones of a creature which lived so long ago-- when the world was young.

BRICKS FROM SAWDUST

Sawdust, once despised, is now one of the most valuable of all waste products. From it we make artificial woods, spirit, dyes, oxalic acid, and a good many forms of blasting powder.

By mixing the dust of fine, hard woods with ivory paste, water glass and glue, a hard mass is formed from which veneers are cut. These do not warp or crack, and will take polish equal to that of old marble.

For furniture, for moulded decorations, and for flooring, various mixtures of sawdust with other materials are employed. One is a celluloid which has a real metallic lustre. These can be coloured as desired.

No fewer than 22 sorts of blasting powder are made with sawdust as a base. 'Heraklin', largely used in French coal mines, is made of sawdust saturated with nitric acid and saltetre, and mixed with sulphur and saltetre. It burns somewhat slowly, so that the coal is merely ripened, and not blown to fragments.

Brickettes for burning are made of coarse sawdust by the addition of tar or pitch, and also bricks for building purposes. Fine sawdust is boiled with water glass, and powdered asbestos and glue mixed in. Bricks so made are damp-proof and fire-proof, besides being very light and easy to handle.

One of the newest and most promising uses of sawdust is to relieve the present paper famine. Not only sawdust, but shavings and wood chips are used. They are boiled down into cellulose, but the process is too intricate to be fully described.

Report from Federation of Field Naturalists Meeting, Launceston 5th April

Delegates - Mr. A. Mrs. J. Rhoades and B. Dugan.

New president - Mr. C. Taylor, Secretary Mr. G. Briton (N.E. Field Nats)  
Vice presidents - Mrs. Cameron and Miss Stocks.

Brief Business

Protection plants on Crown Lands: Clubs to prepare check lists of plant at specific areas. Also clubs to prepare lists of plants in reserves in their areas, and circulate to other clubs.

Trail Bikes: Make use of all forms of publicity to emphasize damage caused by trail bikes especially on formed tracks in parks and reserves. We would like to see areas set aside for trail bike recreation.

Rehabilitation clauses in Mining Act. Local groups to keep eye on mining areas, suggestion re inclusion of mining locality maps on application acknowledged by Minister to have merit and to be considered in future Mining Act amendments.

Grazing at Arthur River area - botanical survey just completed/nil report

Proposal to enlarge Cradle Mountain Lake St. Clair National Park (page 4)





include area of Walls of Jerusalem and proposal for Central Plateau under review.  
Laying of poison on areas of re-afforestation discussed - the effect on native fauna.

Protection of flora on Crown Lands - Act under review.

North East F.N.C. Club to continue action to have Mount Cameron National Park declared a Nature Reserve.  
Bird Observers Association of Tasmania proposed motion that the Federation concentrate its efforts on co-operative field work, rather than conservation matters.

Finally resolved that all clubs should concentrate on co-operative Field work to the advancement of conservation. Clubs should conduct more detailed surveys of various areas similar to our club work in the Dial Range area - seed - Federation to write to Government to have it declared a noxious seed.

Local groups to conduct "pulling out" projects in infected areas.

Things to watch for - CATTLE EGRETTE ARDEOLA ibis (LINNAEUS) 1758

Returning from the Easter Camp we noticed seven cattle egrets feeding with the cattle on the flats at Forth. In our newsletter last May we quoted a report from "Nats News" that 30 cattle egrets had been observed in the Launceston district (April, 1974). Keep your eyes open - look for a large white bird (about the size of a heron) with a hunched-dejected appearance accompanying grazing animals, and let us have your report.

For those who would like to see more birds in our own gardens, an excellent small book is available. It is called "Australian Native Gardens and Birds" by Barbara Salter. It is in the series Jacaranda Pocket Guides and costs about \$2. It gives lists of suitable plants, recipes for bird feed, nesting etc.

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For those who have not yet paid their 1975 sub.

Enclosed herewith is my 1975 sub.

Signed: Mr. Mrs. Miss \_\_\_\_\_

Address ..

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: Bus. \_\_\_\_\_ Private \_\_\_\_\_

Full members ... \$4.50. Group membership (family etc.) \$6.00

Senior, student, pensioner ... \$2.50

Non-member sub to 'The Tasmanian Naturalist' ... \$2.00

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